

Message Text

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12

ACTION AID-20

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 PC-10 USIA-15 IO-14 INR-10 DODE-00 AGR-20

INT-08 COME-00 DRC-01 RSC-01 (ISO) W
----- 032709

P R 211545Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6198

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

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AFDROUGHT

ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, DM, NG

SUBJECT: TRANSPORT DROUGHT RELIEF TO NIGER

1. FOUND CONDITIONS AT PARAKOU TRANSSHIPMENT FACILITY AND
STATE OF PARAKOU-NIAMEY ROAD GENERALLY SATISFACTORY DURING
QUICK INSPECTION TOUR MAY 18-20. STOCKS AT PARAKOU MAY 20
WERE ABOUT 1400 MT. THESE BEING MOVED OUT AT REASONABLE
RATE. HOWEVER, FEAR PARAKOU COULD BECOME BOTTLENECK IF RATE
OF SHIPMENTS FROM COTONOU SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED. AT
PRESENT LEVEL OF ARRIVALS OF SOME 400-500 MT PER DAY, NUMBERS
OF TRUCKS AVAILABLE ARE ADEQUATE. IF RATE OF ARRIVALS
INCREASED TO PROMISED 750 MT PER DAY, OCDN ESTIMATES TRUCKING
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FLEET WILL HAVE TO BE AUGMENTED BY ABOUT 100 LARGE TRUCKS

TO DEAL WITH VOLUME.

2. SOCOPAO REP RESIDENT PARAKOU REPORTS SOME 250 TRUCKS NOW HAULING FROM PARAKOU TO NIGER. DIVERSION SNTN TRUCKS FROM PARAKOU TO KANO HAS REDUCED NUMBER TRUCKS NORMALLY AVILABLE. OTHER FACTORS WHICH HAVE ADDED TO REDUCTION IN HAULAGE CAPACITY FROM PARAKOU ARE: (1) FACT THAT TRUCKS NOW ARE CARRYING CARGOS TO MORE DISTANT POINTS IN NIGER, THUS REDUCING NUMBER ROUND TRIPS IN GIVEN PERIOD, AND (2) EXCESSIVE TIME SPENT BY AFRICAN TRUCKS AWAITING REPAIRS IN PARAKOU AND IN NIGER.

3. DOUBT ANYTHING CAN BE DONE TO AMELIORATE FIRST PROBLEM, BUT SHORTAGE OF CAPITAL SEEMS BE FACTOR IN EXCESSIVE DOWNTIME OF TRUCKS. IF TEMPORARY SCHEME COULD BE WORKED OUT FOR ADVANCE PAYMENTS TO TRUCKERS OR CREDIT PROVIDED TO ALLOW FOR TIMELY REPAIRS, THIS MIGHT GO LONG WAY TOWARDS SOLVING SECOND PROBLEM.

4. NIGER SECTION OF NIAMEY-PARAKOU ROAD IS IN EXCELLENT CONDITION. THE 317 KM BETWEEN PARAKOU AND MALANVILLE IN DAHOMEY IS PASSABLE AT REASONABLY HIGH SPEEDS. HOWEVER, HEAVY TRAFFIC, COUPLED WITH RAINS, WILL CAUSE RAPID DETERIORATION IN NEAR FUTURE UNLESS ENERGETIC MEASURES TAKEN TO MAINTAIN TRAFFICABILITY OF ROAD. THIS PROBLEM COULD BE DEALT WITH BY MOBILIZING DAHOMEAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSISTANCE AND VILLAGERS ALONG ROUTE TO FILL HOLES WITH LATERITE AS THEY OCCUR. SUCH SOLUTION WOULD REQUIRE MONEY TO PAY EXTRA EXPENSES PW AND CASUAL LABOR. HAVE ALREADY BROACHED SUBJECT WITH MIN PW IN GENERAL TERMS. HE AGREEABLE IN PRINCIPLE. DOES RDO NIAMEY HAVE FUNDS TO FINANCE SUCH WORK? HAVE TENTATIVE APPOINTMENT WITH MIN PW MAY 23 TO DISCUSS IN MORE DETAIL. PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHETHER I CAN PROCEED WITH PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO ESTIMATES OF COSTS.

5. ALSO HAVE MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF CABINET OF MIN TRANSPORT FOR 1600 HOURS TODAY TO DISCUSS TRANSPORT SYSTEM PROBLEMS. NIGER PERMANENT REP HAS AGREED ACCOMPANY ME TO PUT PRESSURE ON DAHOMEANS TO IMPROVE UNSATISFACTORY PERLIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORMANCE OF PORT AND OCDN. CONTINUE BELIEVE IMPROVEMENT EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MORE HOPEFUL THAN JURY-RIGGER ALTERNATIVES.

6. ACTION REQUESTED OF RDO/NIAMEY:

(A) NOTIFY EMBASSY WHETHER MONEY FOR TEMPORARY ROAD REPAIRS AVAILABLE.

(B) CAN ADDITIONAL TRUCKS BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR HAULAGE FROM PARAKOU? THIS REGARD, INFORMED PAGE (OSRO) OF DIVERSION SNTN TRUCKS TO KONO. HE AGREES THESE SHOULD BE REDIRECTED TO PARAKOU. RDO REQUESTED TAKE THIS UP WITH APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY IN NIAMEY.

(C) CAN FUNDS BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR ADVANCED PAYMENTS TO SUBSIDIZE REPAIRS OF AFRICAN-OWNED TRUCKS TO REDUCE DOWNTIME?

7. PLEASE REPLY TO ABOVE ON PRIORITY BASIS.
MCNAMARA

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Message Attributes

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